

THE LITERARY TIMES:

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NUMBER V.

SATURDAY, APRIL 11, 1863.

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SATURDAY, APRIL 11, 1863.

PETER THE GREAT AT HOME.*

WE have always been taught to look upon Czar Peter as the father of his country, the great reformer of the state, and the founder of the mighty Russian Empire. He is also familiar to us in the guise of a common shipwright, patiently and toilsomely learning at Deptford, Saardam, and other places, those industrial and mechanical arts with which he wished his subjects to become acquainted. We have also heard a few stories of his rough and ready manner in dealing with all around him, whether prince or peasant. One of our own daily journals, whenever it favours the world with a leading article on Russia, generally contains some allusion to the formidable dubina or cudgel of Peter the Great and the frequent and energetic use he made of it; and many of us have heard of the cudgelling which the favourite Mentschikoff received from his august hands for spoiling the plan of the canals at St. Petersburg, while his master was absent in Holland. We are also familiar with that monstrous act, the execution of his own son, Alexis; but we have been accustomed to look upon the putting to death of one's nearest relations as a sort of epidemic in the Romanoff dynasty. In the work before us we have Peter represented as he lived and moved from day to day, and without intending to cast any blame upon him, the eye-witness of his deeds relates a series of brutalities which have been hitherto unknown, at least to the majority of English readers.

The book under review is a translation, by Count Macdonnell, from the original Latin of Johann Georg Korb, the secretary of an embassy despatched to Moscow in 1698, by the emperor Leopold. The greater portion of the work consists of a diary kept by that functionary; but there is also a very interesting account of the famous revolt of the Streltzy or Musketeers, and many amusing descriptions of Russian life, manners, and customs of the period. There are also short biographies of the most distinguished personages, both native and foreign, at the court of the Czar. The author styles all the foreigners 'Germans,' but the translator tells us that this probably arises from the fact that the Russians commonly use the same word to express a German and a foreigner. Very many of these were Scotchmen, and one of them, whom our author styles 'Sir Patrick de Gordon,' after an adventurous military career in the Swedish, Polish, and Brandenburg services, rose to be general-in-chief of Peter's armies.

General Gordon left behind him an autograph journal in English, containing in six quarto volumes a history of his life down to the year 1699, in which he died. This MS. is preserved in the imperial archives at Moscow, and the translator remarks, 'What an interesting publication would not Gordon's journal be at this moment! How many curious details must be locked up in those six quarto volumes of MS. which he left behind!'

But to return to the 'Diary.' The train of the 'Lord Envoy,' as he is styled throughout the narrative, departed from Vienna on the 10th of January, 1698. There were eight carriages, and fifty horses in addition. This is the order in which the procession set forth:—

'1. The Master of the Horse, on a stately charger, followed by two mounted grooms, leading in the hand proud, high-bred, wild, high-spirited steeds, with housings of bear-skin.

'2. The Lord Envoy's private carriage, covered with parti-coloured cloth to preserve its costly beauty from being injured by the weather, and drawn by six high-bred black steeds.

'3. Next followed the handsome first coach of the officials, protected from the weather in like manner, and occupied by the three imperial missionaries.

'4. Came the second coach of the officials.

'5. Another carriage, made to carry the *batterie de cuisine*.

'6. After this followed a baggage *fourgon*, an enormous machine, the chief impediment on the road.

'7. In a travelling carriage, the inferior officials and running footmen.

'8. Came two vehicles for carrying wine and other burdens, among which must not be passed without particular mention, certain hounds of uncommon size and fleetness, that had been sent from England.'

Journeying along slowly amid many disasters, owing to the snow, broken bridges, bad roads, &c., and seeing all that was to be seen at the various towns on their route, the embassy entered Moscow, on the 29th of April, in very much the same fashion as it had set out from Vienna. They remained there until the 23rd of July, 1699, and the secretary chronicles the occurrences of each day that he considered worth preservation. Many of these are of course trivial, and of no interest to the general reader, such as the continued struggles for precedence between the Polish and Danish envoys, the latter of whom constantly displayed his jealousy of the former, by complaints that the Pole had been invited to a feast where a greater number of dishes and vessels of liquor were set before him than had been offered to himself on a similar occasion.

Moscow has always been celebrated for its great fires, and every now and then we come across the record of a conflagration more or less destructive in its results among the wooden houses of the inhabitants, and thefts, robberies, and murders appear to have been everyday occurrences.

There are several disjointed remarks upon the character of the people scattered about in these two volumes which do not present a very pleasant picture of them; but, judging from what the uneducated Russians of to-day are, there is no reason to regard them as exaggerated or untruthful. We throw a few of these remarks together:—

'But whoever should accept every assertion of the Muscovites for an accomplished fact, would be widely in error. They know well how to feign false disasters of the enemy and successes of their own.'

The experience of the Crimean war, and of the present Polish insurrection, shows that this last trait of character still holds good:—

'We could not but marvel prodigiously at the corrupt morals of this people, and how their abominable custom of lying and perjury is allowed to go unpunished. Search for false witnesses where you will among the Muscovites, and you will find them. For fate hath instituted such an universal perversity of reason in Muscovy, that it is very nearly the index of a superior intellect to be able to cheat.'

And again:—

'I do believe that there is no people that shines so much in outward signs that counterfeit real piety, and in such specious masks of uprightness of heart as this race, which, nevertheless, in dissimulation, fraud, falsehood, and in the most un-

bridled audacity in the commission of every crime, surpasses far and wide all other nations of the universe.'

The punishments inflicted upon criminals were barbarously severe, and always preceded by the application of various tortures to make them confess. Here are two specimens:—

'A mother plotted with her daughter the death of her husband. . . . Both these women suffered the penalty due to their crime, which they confessed, and were buried up to the neck in the earth. The mother bore the intense cold (December) till the third day; the daughter survived till the sixth. When dead their corpses were taken out of the holes and hanged head downwards. . . . This penalty only attaches to the murder of a husband by his wife; men who slay their wives are not punished with such rigour—nay, very often the crime is compounded for merely with money.'

'Six coiners suffered the extreme penalty. The false money was poured molten down their throats.'

There are some very curious notices of their religious and other festivals. The Russians are outwardly a very religious people, never undertaking anything without previous prayer; but their religion at the present day is but skin-deep, and their habitual mockery of sacred things curiously contrasts with their apparent devoutness. Hence we need not be surprised at the following narration:—

'A sham patriarch and a complete set of scenic clergy, dedicated to Bacchus, with solemn festivities, the palace, which was built at the Czar's expense, and which it has pleased him to have called Sefort's. . . . He that bore the assumed honours of the patriarch, was conspicuous in the vestments proper to a bishop. Bacchus was decked with a mitre, and went stark naked. . . . Cupid and Venus were the insignia on his crosier, lest there should be any mistake about what flock he was pastor of. The remaining rout of bacchanalians came after him, some carrying great bowls full of wine, others mead, others again beer and brandy, that last joy of heated Bacchus. And as the wintry cold hindered their binding their brows with laurel, they carried great dishes of dried tobacco leaves, with which, when ignited, they went to the remotest corners of the palace, exhaling these most delectable odours and most pleasant incense to Bacchus from their smutty jaws. Two of those pipes through which some people are pleased to puff smoke—a most empty fancy (oh! Mr. Secretary)—being set crosswise, served the scenic bishop to confirm the rites of consecration. Now who would believe that the sign of the cross—that most precious pledge of our redemption—was held up to mockery?'

In another place we are told that Peter caused one of his Bayars to act the part of a sham patriarch, and he gave his blessing to the guests of the Czar, making the sign of the cross with two tobacco pipes. Afterwards 'the same prelate added to the decency of the dancing by opening it with pontificals and crosier.'

Here is a curious piece of information, which we recommend to the notice of the 'Anti-Tobacco Society':—

'The Muscovite clergy have always, hitherto, superstitiously held the smoking and chewing of that weed (tobacco) 'to be an impious and diabolical custom; nay, even in our time a Russian merchant, to whom the Czar, previous to his departure, had granted the right of selling tobacco on payment of the sum of 15,000 roubles (about 2,250*l.*) per annum, was excommunicated by the Muscovite patriarch—himself, his wife, his children, and grandchildren, and cursed to all infinity.'

What a capital hint is here contained for the Bishop of Rochester and Dean Close!

* Diary of an Austrian Secretary of Legation at the Court of Czar Peter the Great. Translated from the original Latin, and edited by Count Macdonnell. 2 vols. Bradbury and Evans.

We might go on multiplying extracts from these entertaining volumes, but our space forbids us to do more than give the reader a few personal anecdotes of Peter himself. Some of these present him in so unfavourable a light, that we are not surprised to learn, in the translator's preface, that Peter used all his influence at the Court of Vienna to have the obnoxious work destroyed. Hence we are told that less than a dozen copies of the book are now supposed to be actually in existence, one of them being in the British Museum.

The Czar was absent when the 'Lord Envoy' arrived at Moscow, but returned thither in September. His first exploit was to order the beards of his officers and courtiers to be cut off. He was very fond of cutting and slashing—heads, beards, or apparel, he was not very particular which.

'The Czar, perceiving some of his military officers hankering after new fashions, wearing very loose coats, cut off the cuffs that hung down too low, and thus addressed them:—"See, these things are in your way, you are safe nowhere with them; at one moment you upset a glass; then you forgetfully dip them in the sauce: get gaiters made of them."

At one place he is described as kicking one of his courtiers, in a second as drawing blood from the nose of another with his fist, and in a third as having had one of his generals 'almost flogged to death for refusing to give up a German coat that he had, for theatricals.'

Charles the Twelfth of Sweden has been termed the 'Madman of the North,' but the following extract goes a long way to prove that his great rival and foe had also a very good right to the title:—

'Dinner was not yet over, when His Majesty left the room in a rage with his general-in-chief Schalien, with whom he had been warmly disputing; and nobody knew what he was going to do. It was known later that he had gone to question the soldiers, to learn from them how many colonels and other regimental officers that general-in-chief had made without reference to merit, merely for money. In a short time, when he came back, his wrath had grown to such a pitch that he drew his sword, and, facing the general-in-chief, horrified the guests with this threat, "By striking thus, I will mar thy malgovernment." Boiling over with well-grounded anger, he appealed to Prince Romadonowski and to Dumnoi Mikitein Mosciwicz; but finding them excuse the general-in-chief, he grew so hot, that he startled all the guests by striking right and left, he knew not where, with his drawn sword. Kues Romadonowski had to complain of a cut fin^ger, and another of a slight wound on the head. Mikitein Mosciwicz was hurt in the hand as the sword was returning from a stroke. A blow far more deadly was aiming at the general-in-chief, who beyond a doubt would have been stretched in his gore by the Czar's right hand, had not General Sefort (who was almost the only one that might have ventured it), catching the Czar in his arms, drawn back his hand from the stroke. But the Czar, taking it ill that any person should dare to hinder him from sating his most just wrath, wheeled round upon the spot, and struck his unwelcome impediment a hard blow on the back. . . . Merriment followed this dire tempest; the Czar, with a face full of smiles, was present at the dancing; &c.

But in the vengeance which he wreaked upon the revolted Streltzy, Peter gave full scope to his blood-thirsty nature. More than 2,000 of these unhappy musketeers were put to death, and vast numbers sent into exile, many with the loss of nose and ears. This was the way in which they were tortured to make them confess, the Czar himself looking on:—

'After being most atrociously flogged with the knout, fire was applied to roast them; when roasted, they were scourged afresh, and after this second flogging, fire was applied again. The Muscovite rack alternated with these.'

Peter made his Bayars and courtiers undertake the executioner's office, and himself beheaded large numbers of the prisoners with his own hand. To one who asserted his innocence, he said, 'Die, wretch! If thou be innocent, the guilt of thy blood will be mine.'

The particulars of the revolt of these Streltzy—the Janissaries of Russia—which ended in their being disbanded, occupy about seventy pages of the second volume, and are very interesting, as well as little known even to foreigners best acquainted with Russian history; but the details of the executions day after day in the diary are sickening. Our author, however, thinks these severities to have been necessary.

Count Macdonnell has ably discharged his duties as translator, and has been very successful in preserving the quaint diction of the original. There are some faults here and there. In one place the Russian army is described as 'shady,' and in another a woman is described as 'obseded,' whatever that may mean (possessed?). The Russian names are much mis-spelt, and (to cite two instances only) it is difficult to recognise in 'Bebrascentsko,' the crack regiment of the Foot Guards, 'Preobrajenski,' or in the guttural 'guass,' the universal beverage of the country, 'kvas.' Moreover, the famous Troitza monastery near Moscow is spelt at different times Drorza, Droicza, and Troyeza. But the fault, perhaps, after all, does not lie with the translator and editor.

MR. TIMBS.*

THE admirable little treasures of knowledge that Mr. Timbs gives to the world are well calculated to make second-hand learned men. It is only necessary to acquire by heart Mr. Timbs' 'Things not generally known,' and to deliver with spirit the good things therein contained, to pass for a well-informed person. Should some priggish individual insist upon following up a subject you have introduced, and endeavour to draw you out, you must attempt to change the conversation, and if this *ruse* be not successful, leave the room. But a *contretemps* of this description seldom occurs. You have only to use tact in the production of Mr. Timbs' scraps of information, and your reputation will be well established.

We once knew a gentleman who could talk glibly a few words of French. He would address himself with ease on the subject of the weather to some French ladies. They, delighted to find a perfect knowledge of their language in a foreigner, would reply in a profusion of words. Our friend, unable to keep up the conversation, would then smile, bow, and turn on his heel. He thus established the character of an excellent French scholar, but an eccentric gentleman.

The same use must be made of these books. Repeat the lesson correctly and with ease, smile, and retire. Before touching on a topic, it is as well to look round the room, and see that no suspicious person is present. Otherwise the same accident may happen that occurred to a gentleman who was foolish enough to advance a statement which he had parrotly learned from the 'Vestiges of the

* Things to be remembered in *Daily Life*, with *Personal Experiences and Recollections*. By John Timbs, F.S.A.

Creation.' The company was large, and there was present a geologist, who entirely differed from this famous work. He sprang up, at hearing a quotation from a book he hated, and attacked our friend in the most deadly manner for half an hour. The unfortunate snatterer turned pale, smiled, writhed, and tried to hide his foolishness. The geologist went on, and, until he had finished his defence of his system of the creation, did not observe that he was fighting a windmill. The gentleman expressed his approval of everything that had been advanced; the company tittered, and things went on as usual.

We think much unfair attack has been made on Mr. Timbs and the gentlemen who, like him, enlighten the world with useful knowledge on a number of topics. There must be students, and there must be superficial readers. It is impossible, with the active life of England, that many persons can find time to read and think for themselves, and master a few subjects. Such pursuits must be limited to those who have nothing else to occupy them. There must then be left the many thousands of persons who either amuse themselves with practical recreations, or the reading of such books which, without being of very much real use, are certainly perfectly harmless, and likely to lead to the cultivation of a taste for better intellectual literature. How is it that the class of intelligent readers and writers has increased so immensely during the last fifty years, unless it is through the influence of a semi-learned description of literature, which has ultimately led them to become pupils of better masters than those who first induced them to turn their attention to letters? We therefore say to Mr. Timbs—Be of good cheer—be not afraid of the scoffers; and if you encourage one man out of a thousand to obtain a taste for deeper reading than you offer him, your mission will be accomplished.

It is difficult to describe the little work under notice, except that it is divided into the periods of human life, such as 'The School of Life,' 'Business Life,' 'Home Traits,' 'The Spirit of the Age,' and other such sections. In each department are crowded together anecdotes, facts, statistics, and extracts from the authors of all ages without much apparent connection. It is essentially a book to be taken up in the hours between business, when a man desires to philosophise in a small way, and to believe himself to be a little learned. To such patrons of literature we commend the 'Things to be remembered.'

LORD DUFFERIN'S LISPIINGS.*

WE often meet with dull dreary books which we should never suspect were intended to be comical, but for certain indications in their general appearance that tell us that we are expected to be amused. The title is eccentric, the writing is exaggerated, and the illustrations are grotesque; and so, on opening the book, we know at once that it is meant to be facetious, and we dutifully laugh at every grim joke and caricature. There are a good many people who do not know a joke when they meet with it, and who would never have a laugh at all unless they were invited in proper form thus to indulge themselves. To these appreciative persons, Lord Dufferin's 'Lispings' will be an acceptable book. To

* *Lispings* from *Low Latitudes*; or, *Extracts from the Journal of the Hon. Impulsia Gushing-ton*. Edited by Lord Dufferin.

those who enjoy a good laugh, no matter where it is to be found, this beautiful album will be as effective as a dull sermon. We have read and examined it twice, and with the best intentions could not manage to conjure up the faintest smile at one of its pages.

The subject of the book is as stale and tedious as can be conceived. It is the diary of the Hon. Impulsia Gushington, an unprotected female, who, at the advice of her physician, resolves to visit the Nile in search of health. She starts on the journey, accompanied by her faithful companion, is sea-sick on the voyage, and undergoes all the stereotyped inconveniences of a tourist. At Alexandria her companion refuses to mount a donkey, and returns home alone. Miss Gushington continues her journey and meets with endless adventures, all of whom deceive her. She at last falls in love with a Monsieur de Rataplan, who in the last page of the book is proposing marriage. We are promised another volume, in which Miss Gushington's 'adventures in connection with her attachment to Monsieur de Rataplan' are to be described and illustrated at the moderate price of a guinea!

The only good features in the book are the illustrations, which, without being in the least comical, are at all events artistically executed. It is to be regretted that the artist was not provided with better material for his pencil.

Notwithstanding the total absence of fun, wit, and humour in 'Lispings from Low Latitudes,' we believe it will be a popular table-book. It is written by a nobleman and published by Mr. Murray, two strong recommendations in its favour. Many other equally dismal books have met with some success, and there is no reason why Lord Dufferin should not occupy the place he seems ambitious to fill, as a harmless quiz in the drawing-rooms of his numerous relations and friends.

MEMOIRS OF MISERS.*

[SECOND NOTICE.]

WE continue our extracts from Mr. Redding's amusing book. Amongst so many examples that justly deserve our pity, we select one that might almost extort our admiration. It is related of M. Guyot, of Mar-seilles:—

'He devoted himself, for the good of his fellow citizens, to the most miserable life that a man could lead. He had found that for want of water the city had long suffered, particularly in summer, when the sun sometimes burns as fiercely there as it does in Senegal. The want of this noble element bred fevers. The filth of the city remained, neither washed away nor covered with water, and exhaled the most noxious effluvia. The poor were compelled to drink it bad, or to perish of thirst. The plague too had made dreadful havoc by its visitations. In 1720, no less than seventy thousand citizens died, and how much such an evil must have been aggravated where there was only bad water, and even that short in quantity, need not be insisted upon here. M. Guyot determined to give up all that could make life comfortable to remedy an evil which the blustering, haughty, shallow-brained Bourbons ought to have remedied for the nation, in place of squandering the public money in the erection of palaces, in debaucheries, and halls for their parasites. M. Guyot, with scarcely a Louis-d'or to commence, toiled and laboured away his life to make his hundreds and thousands, and die, having given every sou for

which he had laboured so hardly, for the purpose of conveying good water into the city to which he belonged.'

'Poor Guyot was hooted in the streets of Mar-seilles by the boys for his niggardiness, all the time he was devoting himself, his toils, his life, to a piece of unparalleled benevolence.'

Any record of misers would be incomplete did it not include the notorious Daniel Dancer, the most perfect specimen of a miser which we imagine ever lived. He was in the receipt of an income amounting to three thousand per annum, and resided with a sister as penurious as himself. As an instance of the economy of their household, we quote the following:—

'The brother found on the common one morning a sheep, which had died apparently of disease. He took up the dead and decaying animal, carried it home, skinned and cut it up, and his sister made it into pies. Upon these pies the brother and sister luxuriated in their usual frugal manner, until the sheep was wholly devoured. The expression "luxuriated," is borne out by the great partiality which those who had feasted upon it expressed for the savoury carcase. Miss Dancer seeming in low spirits one day, a neighbour enquired the cause. She said that her brother had been scolding her for eating too freely of the mutton pies, and had called her extravagant, which she thought was very hard, knowing she was as saving as he was himself.'

When his sister was ill, it was suggested that a doctor should be sent for. This was his fraternal reply:—

"Why should I waste my money in wickedly endeavouring to counteract the will of Providence? If the old girl's time is come, the nostrums of all the quacks in Christendom cannot save her; and she may as well die now as at any future period."

It does not seem that he over-valued the advantages of personal cleanliness:—

'Dancer very rarely washed himself. He alleged that soap was very dear, that towels would wear out, and that cleanliness became expensive. When the dirt on his skin and his hands and face accumulated to an inconvenience, he chose a sunshiny day, and went to a pool near his house, where, scrubbing himself with the sand, he would lay himself on his back and so let the sun dry him.'

Nor does it appear that the state of his under-linen occasioned him much anxiety:—

'In regard to shirts, he allowed himself a couple annually in the earlier part of his life, but for some years previous to his decease he wore no more than one a year. This he purchased second-hand at an old clothes shop, rarely, if ever, exceeding half-a-crown in the price. Never after a shirt came into his hands was it known to have been washed, or even mended. It generally fell from his back in rags.'

'After the death of his sister he would never permit his sheets to be removed, and when at length they became worn out, he would not allow them to be replaced, but would sleep in woollen. He would neither permit his house to be cleaned, nor his bed to be made any more.'

A neighbour, Lady Tempest, seems to have been the only person who had the slightest influence over this eccentric man:—

'One day she prevailed upon him to purchase a hat, having worn his old one for thirteen years. He paid a Jew a shilling for his new purchase. The next day upon going to see him, she observed to her no small astonishment that he still wore his old hat. Upon enquiring the reason, it came out that he had prevailed on one Griffiths, his servant, to give him sixpence profit on the hat he had bought but the day before.'

The following method, adopted by Mr. Dancer to warm up a dish, had the merit of being alike original and inexpensive:—

'Lady Tempest knew he was fond of trout stewed in claret, and sent him some as a present. It was during frosty weather, and the stew from lying by at night became congealed. As he was very subject to toothache, he did not dare to eat it until it was warmed, and he could not afford a fire on purpose. His thrift soon suggested a means of imparting warmth to the stew, sufficient for him to partake of it without incurring pain or expense. In severe weather, as it was then, he always lay in bed to keep himself warm, and he thought a similar mode might as well be adopted with the fish; to this end he had it put with the sauce between two pewter plates, and placing them under his body, he sat upon them until their contents were sufficiently warm.'

Amongst other misers Mr. Redding mentions Colonel Thornton, who united to his habit of usury an inveterate tendency to lying. The following exhibits a Munchausen-like ability in the latter respect:—

"You have the reputation of being a good shot, Colonel, an excellent shot?"

"Ah, sir; I shoot with a ramrod sometimes."

"Shoot with a ramrod?"

"Why, how in the devil's name would you shoot when you are in a hurry?"

"I really don't understand you."

"This is what I mean, sir. For example, I was going out one fine morning towards the latter end of October, when I saw the London mail changing horses, as it always did within a mile of my gates. I suddenly recollected that I had promised my friend F—a basket of game. Devil a trigger had I pulled. The coach was ready, what was to be done? I leaped over the hedge, fired off my ramrod, and may I be hanged if I did not spit, as it were, four partridges, and a brace of pheasants. Now I should be a liar if I were to say I did the same thing twice—in point of number I mean!"

Mr. Redding thus notices the eccentric French miser Dubois, in whom a great desire for display was united with the most intense covetousness:—

'Among his property, by inheritance, was much rich plate, and articles of furniture in excellent taste. He had from this source a fine and costly sideboard of plate, which had he not received in the foregoing mode, he never would have had the heart to purchase. This rich service was every day placed in order, as if some splendid entertainment were intended to be given, and he was wonderfully flattered when any one calling at his house, and being designedly led through his *salle à manger* about the usual dinner hour, applauded the splendour of what was there laid out. The silver dishes were borne on and off the table, while he was at dinner, as if the covers concealed the best meals, and being carried through a waiting room for strangers, on their way back to the pantry or kitchen, gave an idea of that kind of greatness of which their owner was desirous of producing the impression.'

In the midst of all this empty show and secret meanness, Dubois dined on a few cheap vegetables and a bit of pork or mutton, brought on dishes and covers that mocked the eye of the stranger; for at dinner or supper all was laid out with the same array of plate. Silver dishes contained a single egg or a few olives, accompanied with a glass of poor weak wine. These composed his meal, the miserable fragments of which he would have saved or duly accounted for, and preserved towards the next day's potage.

Six noble silver candlesticks were brought into the saloon every evening, and the lights were displayed during the presence of a visitor, but extinguished at the moment of his departure. Then the great man repaired to his bedroom, which was lit with a miserable little taper that only served to throw a dingy light upon the surrounding gloom.

When going out, his servants, ill fed ordinarily and plainly dressed, attended their master to the seat of justice, or to the court, in fine liveries.

* *Memoirs of Remarkable Misers.* By Cyrus Redding. 2 vols. London: Charles J. Skeet. 1863.

These were taken off on returning home, in order to preserve their splendid appearance, and prevent them from being soiled.*

He bequeathed his property to a cousin, who obtained it by the following economical proceeding. It is Dubois who is speaking to the notary:—

"I have been thinking my next nearest relative T— will squander it. Here is a nice letter from a thrifty cousin of mine; see how close he has written it, on a quarter of a sheet of paper. I shall make him my heir, for he knows how to prevent waste. What would be the use of a whole sheet of paper, when he can say all upon this slip. This is no disrespect to me, he is a good economist, and he shall be my heir."

It is a curious trait in the character of avaricious men that, though penurious during their lives, a splendid funeral is frequently provided for in their will. The contrary was the case with Edward Nokes, of Hornchurch, who, by his own direction, was buried in this curious fashion:—

"A short time before his death, which he hastened by the daily indulgence in nearly a quart of spirits, he gave a strict charge that his coffin should not have a nail in it, which was actually adhered to, the lid being made fast with hinges of cord, and minus a coffin plate, for which the initials E.N. cut upon the wood were substituted. His shroud was made of a pound of wool. The coffin was covered with a sheet in place of a pall, and was carried by six men, to each of whom he directed a gratuity of half-a-crown. At his particular desire too, not one who followed him to the grave was in mourning; but, on the contrary, each of the mourners appeared to try whose dress should be the most striking. Even the undertaker was dressed in a blue coat and scarlet waistcoat."

The funeral of the noted miser of the time of Charles II., Sir John Cutler, affords a strong contrast to the foregoing, its total cost being seven thousand six hundred and sixty-six pounds.

As an instance of how even the parental instinct becomes merged in the greed for gain, Mr. Redding mentions the case of the two M—s. The father had made a considerable fortune, but suffered his sons to enter into business with borrowed money. The sons were—

"honest hard-working men, who for years had to struggle to pay off the sum they had borrowed. The elder after hard toil for nearly twenty years, was successful. The younger had worked as hard as his brother, but bad debts added to his liabilities, and he was obliged to compromise with his creditors. . . . When the father was asked why he did not assist his sons, he replied "his own father had never assisted him, and he had made his way, let them do the same." . . . At length the younger M— resolved to leave the home of his fathers. He went to Liverpool, and setting sail for America in a merchant ship, was never more heard of. Then repentance came too late upon the miserly parent. He was continually haunted by the image of his lost child. His hoarded money alone appeared at times to arrest his attention as it had done before, and then again it would seem to disgust him. . . . It was evident that he was getting lower and lower in health, and at length he was persuaded to make his will. Upon this occasion he sent for his son, and telling him that he would soon be master of all his father's property, he bade him be frugal with it. "George," said he, "take care of it; for the price I have paid for it, I too much fear, is eternal misery."

We are somewhat surprised, in conclusion, that the author should have omitted the name of Shanty Williams, as he was familiarly called, a native of Cymwd. He lived about

sixty years ago, and the extraordinary circumstances which attended his decease occasioned no little noise at the time. He was accustomed to travel through the West of England, picking up whatever he could on the road, and selling it at the next town. In this way in the course of years he amassed a considerable sum, which he put out to interest. Disease at last overtook him in a wretched lodging at Bristol. The old man, conscious of his approaching end, could not even then withstand his money-making propensity. He sent for three men who were notorious body-snatchers, and so contrived that he should be visited by each in succession. He had the rogues to sell his corpse to each man for three guineas, and before they discovered the cheat, contrived to secure the money; his death a few hours afterwards rendering all complaint on the part of his victims useless.

Nor does Mr. Redding seem to have heard of the old woman at Dorchester, who kept a huckster's shop, and in the latter days of her life formed hangings to her bed of one pound bank notes. These were delicately gummed to curtains of calico, and so the old woman slept and dreamed in an atmosphere of money. She was found dead, surrounded by her treasures, and a clause was found in her will, directing that one of her favourite notes should be placed under her head in her coffin. Mr. Redding does not say much of the curious way in which some misers have concealed their wealth. It is well known that an old bill-discounter in Dean Street, London, had a complete layer of sovereigns placed under the floor-cloth in the room in which he lived. These sovereigns were placed so closely together, that their presence was never suspected, and it was some months after the miser's death that they were accidentally discovered.

In spite of these omissions we can conscientiously declare that Mr. Redding's book is by far the most complete work of its kind that we are acquainted with.

THE DESERTED HOUSE AT HAWKSWORTH.*

IT is a pity that young novelists should feel themselves compelled to fill three volumes with the first flights of their genius. What a great mass of superfluous moralising and painful verbosity might be saved if they would condescend to tell us their first story in a single book. It is, we believe, unnatural to a young writer to be diffuse, and it is only the duty he feels himself under, to spin out his matter into the usual bulk, that leads him into the extravagance of words that characterises so many maiden efforts.

The story of the 'Deserted House' might well be satisfactorily explained in half a volume, and the author would, by adopting this economical style of writing, make a friend of the critic, who is now wearied with a day's hard, dull, dry reading. The plot of this novel is its principal merit, and yet we can say but little in praise of even the story. Everything turns upon a will and confession, which are hidden and discovered at the convenience of the author, in order to act as a sort of Providence towards the principal characters, who are thus punished or rewarded by the possession of the estates to which they refer. This is not the first, or the hundredth time, that a will has served this useful purpose. The characters are mere abstractions, to be operated upon by circumstances, and have no influence whatever on the story. This is the leading fault with the novels of the present day, the personages being in general inhuman, and consequently without interest to any but the greedy

* The Deserted House at Hawksworth. In 3 vols. London: Hurst & Blackett.

reader who gulps a novel per diem. Without further criticism, we give the plot of 'The Deserted House at Hawksworth.'

Mr. Elford, the owner of the Deserted House at Hawksworth, a handsome and wealthy man, is on the point of marriage with Harriet Strafield, the beautiful daughter of a half-pay lieutenant. On the day appointed for the marriage, when the wedding breakfast is laid and the guests are assembled, a messenger arrives to say that the lady is at that moment going through the ceremony that was to have united her to Mr. Elford, with Alan Derinzev, her singing master. The expectant bridegroom and the guests are startled by a peal of merry bells, which, having been bespoken for the jilted man, are rung, in ignorance of the change of events and bridegrooms. Mr. Elford receives the startling news with becoming stoicism, and with no apparent emotion, save 'a deadly hue,' he calls upon his assembled friends to assist him in carrying out his determination. Workmen are summoned, and are directed to fasten up the house, leaving everything as it was prepared for the wedding party. A high wall is then built round it, and Mr. Elford takes up his residence in a house immediately opposite, to watch and brood over what was to have been the scene of his domestic happiness. Twenty years elapse, and Mr. Elford is dying. He again calls his friends together to witness the re-opening of the Deserted House, in which he had left a written history of his life, and the confession of a great secret. The house is opened, but the interesting history is not forthcoming; and Mr. Elford dies, after vainly trying to extort a promise from his nephew and heir (Trevor Ebrington) that none of his money should be spent on the family of the woman who had wronged him. The uncle at the same time hints that some unexpected news may some day turn up, which will disturb his successor in the enjoyment of his wealth. Trevor Ebrington, nevertheless, loses no time in taking possession of the estates, and soon afterwards falls in love with Christina Gordon, a simple and beautiful girl, who is lodging with her widow mother in an obscure village in Cornwall. Her antecedents are unknown, but eventually Trevor's mother discovers that she is the daughter of the woman who broke Mr. Elford's heart, and the marriage is in consequence broken off. Meantime good fortune attends Christina. Her mother, Mrs. Gordon, who had married again, is sought out by a rich relative, Captain Renfry, and she and Christina are at once installed in his house, as housekeeper and companion to his wife. Christina charms the old sailor, and he resolves on making her his heiress, to the prejudice of a foundling youth he had adopted, and to whom he had promised his fortune in the event of no relative appearing. The foundling, Lieutenant Churchill, who has been educated for the navy by his adopter, arrives on the very day that Christina is being introduced as Captain Renfry's heiress, and a feeling of hatred and jealousy at once springs up in his breast. This, however, very shortly succumbs to a violent passion for his rival, and after a hasty courtship he is married to her. On the wedding-day a frantic girl rushes in, claims Lieutenant Churchill as hers, upbraids him with cruelty, and is driven from the house, but only to return stealthily, and to be prevented by her seducer from stabbing his bride. She then stabs herself, and accuses Churchill of murdering her. But she recovers, and exculpates him, and for a time all goes smoothly. We now return to Kilverton, where a sale of household goods is going on, which includes the very escritoire which stood for so many years in Mr. Elford's own bed-room. It is knocked down to Mr. Clayton, an old and valued friend, and, being extremely rotten, it falls to pieces in the room. As the experienced novel reader will expect, out drops the confession or will, duly sealed and addressed to the executors. It is formally opened in the lawyer's office, and Trevor Ebrington learns that he has been an usurper—that Mr. Elford had been privately married, and was a widower and a father before his abandonment by Harriet Strafield. The son of

the secret marriage is alive, and is no other than Lieutenant Churchill. Some of Trevor's friends advise the concealment of this discovery, but he will not hear of this dishonourable course, and at once gives up his estates to Churchill, who brings his young wife and her mother to live at Hawksworth. Trevor Ebrington quietly retires to a curacy he had held before his accession to his uncle's fortune. A son is born in the ill-omened house, and on the day of the christening Churchill steals out to meet Mariana, who had forgiven him her wrongs and consented to be his mistress. In a fit of maniacal passion at his coldness and neglect, she pushes him off a cliff into the sea, and thus ended the life of her false and wretched paramour. She wanders about the country for a few days, and at last dies of want. In the course of four years, poetical justice is rendered to the principal characters of the book. The Rev. Trevor Ebrington, who had so needlessly jilted Christina, is married to her, and she respects and loves him as if there had been no such person as Lieutenant Churchill. It will be seen that the story, like all modern novels, is needlessly improbable and mysterious. There was no reason why Mr. Elford's marriage should have been concealed, and, having been concealed, there was no reason why the confession should have been withheld, after the deserted house had been opened expressly to discover it. These mysteries are, however, we suppose, indispensable to a certain class of writers, who, if they had no riddle to offer for our solution, would have no right to address us at all.

MR. SALA'S NEW NOVEL.*

THIS work, originally published in 'Temple Bar,' the magazine of which its author was, until recently, the editor, is now presented to the public in a separate form. Our review is, however, on the novel as it appeared in the magazine. Its full title is: 'The Strange Adventures of Captain Dangerous, who was a Soldier, a Pirate, a Merchant, a Spy, a Slave among the Moors, a Bashaw in the Service of the Great Turk, and died at last in his own House in Hanover Square,' and it is described as 'a Narrative in Plain English attempted by George Augustus Sala.'

The form of the 'Narrative' is autobiographical, and throughout the whole of his varied adventures the captain boasts that he always acted as a man of honour, although ever and anon some ugly little admissions peep forth which may lead the reader of his memoirs to a somewhat different conclusion. The first chapter stands to the remainder of the book very much in the same relation that an overture does to an opera, for, while it possesses much that is peculiarly its own, it every now and then gives us a phrase or two of the melodies which are afterwards to follow in the body of the work. Or, to use a somewhat more homely comparison, it is like those odours which, wafted from kitchen regions, greet us as we cross the entrance hall of the hospitable mansion whither we have been bidden to a banquet. By this means the appetite is agreeably stimulated, and our author has ingeniously acted upon the hint, thus afforded by the grosser corporeal tastes, in the mental feast which he has spread before us. Captain Dangerous informs us that he is writing in the year of grace 1780, being now sixty-eight years old, and tells us that he has one daughter, married, and of her, as well as of the 'departed saint,' her mother, he gives us a short personal description. He also takes the opportunity of denouncing his detractors in very much the same energetic and opprobrious fashion as Mr. Sala himself denounces his critics of the present day; and having done this to his heart's content, he draws up the curtain, and the drama of his life begins. The first scene is laid in the very same house in which we find him sixty years afterwards, and the chief *dramatis personæ* are

himself—a child of eight years old—and his grandmother, a stately dame of ninety, dressed in black velvet and diamonds. On the 30th day of January in each year, however, her velvet dress is changed for another black robe trimmed with red ribbon in the form of a cross, and rubies take the place of diamonds. This day would be passed in her private cabinet amidst her relics, and in reading the special service for the anniversary of the martyrdom of Charles I. But on the other hand, when pressed to read the prayers for the 29th of May, she replies, 'I dare not.' There is a great mystery connected with this lady. In early life her brother and her lover had both been shot by Cromwell's order. In return for this she attempts to shoot the Protector, but fails, and is imprisoned until after his death. In this prison she makes the acquaintance of a gentleman, who is another of Cromwell's victims. This personage is still more mysterious than the lady, and always wears a black velvet glove on his right hand. Charles II., soon after his accession, pays him a visit although he has described the crime which the prisoner has committed as one that cannot be repented of. The secret of this crime was only known to Oliver Cromwell, Charles the Second, and the prisoner, who tells the king that Oliver had imprisoned him because 'he feared lest the shedder of blood should become the avenger of blood.' Of this mysterious personage, Captain Dangerous tells us no more, except that he was his grandfather, and of his grandmother we learn nothing further until we find her in Hanover Square in 1714. Of her father and mother the captain knows nothing; but he throws out strange hints that he is of noble, if not of royal, lineage. His grandmother dies without making any provision for him, and he is carried off to school, like a cast-away, and boasting no other appellation but that of 'the boy Jack.' Here he is nearly flogged to death by the tyrant pedagogue, one of the many Hopleys of that period. At length he runs away and joins the 'Blacks' of Charlwood Chase, who gain their subsistence by killing the king's deer without his permission. Captain Night, the chief of this band of desperadoes, adds the surname of 'Dangerous' to the old appellation of 'Jack,' and by this title is our hero known ever afterwards. But the gang is broken up by the strong arm of the law, and little Jack Dangerous, at the age of twelve years, is sentenced to be hanged. However, his sentence is, after much trouble, commuted, and he is 'taken up' by a London merchant for transportation to the West Indies, to be sold to the planters there. But the captain of the ship takes a fancy to him, and puts him on shore in Jamaica free. He enters the service of an old mulatto washerwoman as clerk and bookkeeper. Being turned out of this employment, he returns to Europe in a Dutch vessel, and lands at Ostend. There he is reduced very low, but eventually enters the service of a wealthy English mannikin, who is making the grand tour. After visiting many continental cities in this capacity, he returns to England. Then ensues a gap of fifteen years, and we again meet our hero at the age of thirty-three. Captain Dangerous is very careful to tell us what he was not during this period, but declines to state what he was. Yet from many incautious slips here and there in the course of his narrative, we are led to the conclusion that he was a pirate and the master of a slaver. Let him speak for himself.

'My notion of a merchant is that of a bold spirit who embarks on his own venture, in his own ship, and is his own supercargo, and has good store of guns and bold spirits like himself on board, and sails to and fro on the high seas whithersoever he pleases. As to the colour of the flag he is under, what matters it if it be of no colour at all, as old Robin Roughhead used to say to me—even black, which is the negation of all colour? So I have traded in my way, and am the better by some thousands of pounds for my trading now.'

At the end of this doubtful period we find John Dangerous one of the king's warders in the 'Ancient and Honourable Tower of London,' where

among other things he witnessed the execution of Simon Frazer, Lord Lovat. Getting tired of this occupation he dubs himself Captain and sets up for a man of pleasure at the West End. But his funds run low, and he is fain to engage himself to 'one Mr. Macanaper, an Irishman, who had been a pupil of the famous Mr. Figg, master of the noble art of self-defence.' Leaving this worthy, he next joins a privateering expedition fitted out against the Spaniards, as purser and secretary to the commander. After a voyage round the world, he returns to Europe with 2,000*l.* prize-money, and settles down at Amsterdam, where he enters into partnership with a Dutch East India merchant. But the partner turns out to be a rogue, and becomes bankrupt, having previously made away with 'Mynheer Jan van Dangerous' 2,000*l.* Again is our hero reduced to great poverty; and we next find him at Bruxelles, as a teacher of languages. But he falls under the suspicion of the clergy as a 'heretic outlaw, dealing in magic,' and flees to Paris. There he is engaged at the Grand Opera, at one livre ten sols a night, to enact the part of one of the furies in the ballet of Orpheus and Eurydice. He saves one Silias Lovel, a ballet-dancer, from death by burning, and she makes interest in his behalf with the cardinal, who is all-powerful at court. He is taken into the cardinal's service, and eventually despatched by his master on a confidential mission—in fact, as a spy to the south of Europe. While on his way, by sea, from Malta to Constantinople, he is taken prisoner by an Algerine pirate. He is then placed at the oar in the Dey's galley, but is afterwards promoted first to be a gardener and afterwards a cymbal player in the Dey's band. While thus engaged, he meets with Silias, who had also been carried captive by the Algerine pirates, but, more fortunate than her old friend, had fallen into the hands of a learned and benevolent Moorish physician. Silias confesses her love for John Dangerous, and the humane physician having purchased him from the Dey, they were married by a Redemptorist monk, who had taken up his abode at Algiers to minister to the wants of the Christian captives. But Fortune smiles not long upon the newly-wedded pair. The good physician dies, and the Dey seizes John Dangerous and throws him into prison. He is delivered thence by a stratagem of the Redemptorist monk, but is carried away to Constantinople, and there sold anew into slavery. He is purchased by a merchant of Damascus, and in that city passes ten years of his life. He gradually rises in favour with his new master, and is taken by him into partnership. At length he leaves his partner, and with 20,000*l.* sets up for himself as a merchant at Broussa, in all outward appearance and observances a strict Mahometan. As Gholab Hassan, he prospers exceedingly, and having been instrumental in quelling a revolt, is named by the Sultan Bashaw of Broussa, the holder of that office being bow-stringed, in the good old fashion, to make room for him. Gholab goes to Constantinople to receive investiture, and there meets with his wife Silias, and a daughter of the same name, who had been born in the interval. His wife, more mindful of him than he had been of her, had passed the time in searching for her lost husband, and having received some clue, had come to Constantinople, where she was living in the house of the French ambassador. This official interests himself in their favour, and under his auspices Gholab Hassan throws off his Mahometan garb and his new honours. They betake themselves by way of Odessa to Moscow, and thence to St. Petersburg. Rejecting the advances of the Empress Catherine to enter her service, John Dangerous takes his family to Paris, where his wife dies. A yearning to lay his bones in his own country overtakes him, and he returns to England and purchases the house which had once been his grandmother's, and so brings his wanderings to a close.

While he is emphatically a man of action, Captain Dangerous is also a man of thought, and his memoirs are interspersed with a great many philosophical and satirical reflections. His editor tells us that in some things he was in advance of the

* 'The Strange Adventures of Captain Dangerous. A Narrative in Plain English attempted by George Augustus Sala.'

times in which he lived. This is true enough. He gives a long catalogue of horrible tortures inflicted upon the slaves in the West Indies, and moralises upon them in the most feeling terms. He also indulges in some excellent remarks upon the then state of the law and the penal code, and says some very sharp things concerning the fondness of women for attending criminal trials. He gives us also some very philosophical reflections upon the estrangements and dislikes between parents and children, which are, he says, especially noticeable among the higher classes, and he attributes their origin in a great measure to the fact that 'too many of our fashionable fair dames are given to the cruelly pernicious practice of sending their infants to nurse almost the very next week after they are born.' Nothing is too great or too small for him. He possesses some excellent notions on the subject of suicide, but he rather poses one by saying, in conclusion, 'If it comes to powder and ball, why a man of courage would much sooner blow out somebody else's brains instead of his own.' He has some peculiar ideas about the Old Testament. When he was on his voyage to Jamaica he used occasionally to read the Bible to the captain after dinner, and he tells us that the captain

'was ever coarse and ungovernable, and would have no righteous doctrine or tender precepts, but only took delight when I read to him from the Old Scriptures the stories of the Jews, their bloody wars, and how their captains and men-of-war slew their thousands and their tens of thousands in battle. And with shame I own that 'twas these furious narratives that I liked also, and with exceeding pleasure read of Joshua, his victories, and Samson, his achievements, and Gideon, how he battled, and Agag, how they hewed him to pieces. Little cockering books I see now put forth with pretty deceiving pictures' (in 1780), 'which little children are bidden to read. Stories from the Old Testament are dressed up in pretty sugared language. Oh, you makers of these little books! Oh, you fond mothers who place them so deftly in your children's hands! bethink you whether this strong meat is fit for babes. An old man whose life has been passed in storms, and stratagems, and violence, not innocent of blood-spilling, bids you beware! Let the children read that other book, its sweet and tender counsels, its examples of mercy and love to all mankind.

"Why shouldn't I torture the cat?" asks little Tommy, "Didn't the man in the Good Book tie blazing torches to the foxes' tails?" And little Tommy has some show of reason on his side.'

The above extract will also serve as a fair sample of the 'plain English' in which the narrative is written, and which, Mr. Sala expressly tells us, is not modelled upon the English of Swift, Pope, Addison, and Steele, an announcement, by the way, perfectly unnecessary. We quite agree with Mr. Sala in dispensing with the old spelling, and we think he might with advantage have also dispensed with the old fashion of a superabundance of capital letters. The author would appear to be of the same mind with us in this matter, for the capitals occur much less frequently in the latter portion of his work than in the earlier chapters.

There is plenty of humour in the book, and abundance of quaint conceits that are very amusing. Thus, when Dangerous has been delirious from fever, and is just recovering his consciousness, the captain of the privateer says to him:

'I've done all I could for you, brother. I've read you most part of the story of Bel and the Dragon, likewise the Articles of War, and a lot of psalms out of Sternhold and Hopkins.'

Here is another passage:—

'How he swore! I never heard a man take the entrails of Alexander the Great in vain before; but this was an ordinary expletive with Don Ercolo.'

This is not very refined, but the captain remarks in another place:

'But 'tis astonishing what a mark you can make with a coarse jest, if you only go far enough, and forswear justice and decency;'

In 'Captain Dangerous' Mr. Sala displays a wonderful prodigality of material. Old volumes of travels, guide books, parliamentary blue books, &c. &c., are all laid under contribution. Many of the notabilities of the time, in various countries, figure in his pages, and the trial and execution of Lord Lovat, the tortures of Damians, Sheenstone's ballad of 'Jemmy Dawson' turned into prose, and a brief account of Alexander Selkirk, are among the ingredients of his *pot-pourri*. The early chapters of the book are by far the best, both in style and matter, for, as in the 'Seven Sons of Mamon,' the promise of the opening scenes is not borne out by the after portions of the book. Whether this arises from Mr. Sala's getting tired of his work as it proceeds, or whether it be that he is incapable of a long and evenly sustained flight, we know not. Perhaps the first hypothesis is the correct one, for, as usual, Mr. Sala winds up his story very suddenly at the end. It is a pity that an author of Mr. Sala's undoubted—although we venture to say, somewhat overrated—ability, should write so hastily and carelessly as he too often does. He appears to forget at one portion of his book what he has said in another, and thus produces serious blemishes in his story, regarded as a work of art. Of this we shall content ourselves with mentioning two or three instances from the work before us. In the first case, Captain Dangerous, at the age of sixty-eight, is made to say that he is some thousands of pounds the better for his peculiar trading by sea, and then afterwards we find him a beggar more than once, after that sea-trading is over, the fortune with which he eventually retires into private life having been made upon a silk plantation in the Lebanon, and as a merchant at Broussa. In another instance the Captain says:—

'You see, my friends, that this is no cunningly-spun romance, in which a character disappears for a season and turns up again, as pat as you please, at the end of the fourth volume; but a plain narrative of facts, in which the personages introduced must needs come and go, precisely as they came and went to me in real life.'

And yet after this we find Captain Night of Charlwood Chase turning up again at Malta as Don Ercolo di San Lorenzo, and, what is still more strange, recognising in the Chevalier Escarbotin, the French spy, aged 46, the little English boy, John Dangerous, whom he had not seen since he was 12 years old! A third instance may be cited in the fact that Captain Dangerous is constantly displaying acquaintance with various authors, although in another place he says: 'There was a paltry parcel of books at the Stag o' Tyne, and these I read over and over again at my leisure. There was a History of the Persecutions undergone by the Quakers, and Bishop Sprat's Narrative of the Conspiracy of Blackhead and the others against him. There was 'Foxe's Martyrs' and 'God's Revenge against Murder' (a very grim tome), and Mr. Daniel Defoe's 'Life of Moll Flanders' and 'Colonel Jack.' These, with two or three play-books, and a novel of Mrs. Aphra Behn (very scurrilous), a few ballads, and some ridiculous chap-books, about knights and fairies and dragons, made up the tattered and torn library of our house in Charlwood Chase. 'Twas good enough, you may say, for a nest of deer-stealers. Well, there might have been a worse one; but these, I can aver, with English and foreign newspapers and letters, and my Bible in later life, have been all the reading that John Dangerous can boast of.'

Another minor instance of this same carelessness occurs where the boy at one time speaks of his wound as being in his flank, and further on as being in his arm.

Mr. Sala possesses a great flow of words and an ingenious facility of adaptation and imitation. He has told the world that he served his apprenticeship to literature under Charles Dickens, but he more often appears to copy Thackeray than

that other great master of the craft. We must, however, be tender with Mr. Sala, for he is rather a ticklish person to find fault with. He is a literary porcupine; in fact he is more dangerous than an ordinary porcupine, for he comes forth to meet not only his critics *in esse*, but *in posse* also, and sticks his quills into us before we have attacked him. It is an ingenious plan; and putting on a bold front and brazening a matter out has often served a man at a pinch; but we are not to be deterred from awarding blame where we think blame is justly due by any number of hard nashes, whether drawn from his own copious vocabulary, or borrowed from the *dramatis persone* of the old playwrights.

LITERARY RHYMES

FOR 'THE LITERARY TIMES.'

THERE was an old author call'd Thackeray,
Who slash'd at all canting and quackery;
So each humbug or snob,
Who caught one for his nob,
Cried, 'What an old cynic is Thackeray.'

There was an old author call'd Trollope,
Who wrote novels and tales by the dollop;
Though he writes by wholesale,
His ideas are retail,
This popular book-maker, Trollope.

There was an old downy bird, Dickens,
Who rear'd quite a brood of young chickens,
That 'all the year round,'
Of his pipe mock the sound,
And try to be taken for Dickens.

There was a *bas bleu* call'd Miss Braddon,
Whose heroine was mostly a bad'un;
Theft, murder, and arson,
And frauds on the parson,
Were the themes that delighted Miss Braddon.

There was a fair writer call'd Wood,
Whose example, though not at all good,
There were many to follow,
So it won't do to holla
Till we're out of this 'sensation Wood.'

There was an old scribe—Wilkie Collins,
Who with one book earn'd endless extollin';
But despite present fame,
Very like with 'No Name'
He'll go down to the future, this Collins.

TRIBOULET.

GRACE OF GLENHOLME.*

AN orator having been questioned by an aspirant as to the qualities that were necessary in order to acquire perfection in his art, informed the tyro that one principal requisite was to have 'something to say.' By a parallel reasoning, we pronounce 'a story to tell' the chief obligation imposed upon the novelist. We do not anticipate that Mr. William Platt will coincide in this opinion, inasmuch as the plot of his novel is, we think, the weakest with which we have the misfortune to be acquainted. Nor is the want of interest the only fault of the story. The design is so overlaid with 'outward limbs and flourishes,' that it requires a literary detective to trace it through the labyrinth of its wanderings and entanglements.

Kitty and Amy Oldeastle are the daughters of a deceased ironmaster, who has left them each a sum of five thousand pounds. The works are bequeathed to his only son, Christopher. Amy, the younger sister, becomes acquainted with a certain Lieutenant Harrington, and ultimately, in opposition to the wishes of her family, marries, and accompanies him to India. In consequence of the improvidence of the lieutenant, the couple, in the course of time, are seriously encumbered with debt.

* Grace of Glenholme. A Novel. By William Platt. 3 vols. London: T. C. Newby.

Amy writes to her brother for assistance; but when the appeal reaches England, he is on his death-bed. Amy's letter is intercepted by Kitty, who wishes her sister to be in future wholly dependent on her good-will. On the death of the invalid, Kitty is installed as the owner of the works, and succeeds to the large fortune accumulated by her father and brother. As a symptom of good-will, she encloses a draft for a hundred pounds to Amy in the same letter which announces the decease of their brother. But this sum not being nearly sufficient, Amy, on the part of her husband, requests a further supply. This application remains for a long time unacknowledged. Worn out with expectation, the lieutenant, unknown to his wife, writes an angry letter to his sister-in-law, administering some bitter reproaches, which Miss Oldcastle cannot easily forget. Harrington's unfortunate communication is crossed by the reply from Kitty, which contains an order for twelve hundred pounds—a sum more than sufficient to discharge their liabilities. With the balance, the couple, accompanied by their little boy, Ernest, go up to the hills, previous to their contemplated return to England. Lieutenant Harrington possesses an unhappy inclination for gaming, and also a disposition to talk somewhat too freely of his friends. In the indulgence of this latter weakness, he makes some unpleasant allusions, referring to the antecedents of an acquaintance, one Lady Beauclerk. Her husband, Colonel Beauclerk—a dead shot—hearing of the lieutenant's remarks, involves him in a gaming quarrel, and shoots him in a duel. Thus suddenly widowed, Amy returns with the youthful Ernest to England, and finds Kitty deeply embittered by the letter she had received from the lieutenant. Amy is peculiarly unfortunate in the transmission of her correspondence. The apologetic explanation, with which Amy had acknowledged the receipt of the twelve hundred pounds, had been withheld from Miss Kitty by a Miss Leach, her distant relative, who lives with and is dependent on her. Kitty requires an apology. Amy, knowing that one has been already sent, refuses a second. The sisters are both Oldcastles. Neither will 'give in'; and thus, although residing within a few miles of each other, they live mutually estranged for sixteen years.

But our readers may ask, Where all this time is 'Grace of Glenholme?' We are not introduced to her till we have nearly half completed the second volume. She is then a baby in long clothes whom Miss Kitty has adopted. The infant had been brought to her by a workman, who had discovered her floating in a basket on the river. But sixteen years speedily elapse when a novelist wills it, and in the course of a few pages we make her acquaintance as a full-grown young lady residing at Glenholme, an estate belonging to Miss Oldcastle. She becomes accidentally acquainted with Mr. Ernest Harrington, the nephew of Miss Kitty, and a mutual passion is the result. Ernest, beside, is fortunate enough to save her when her life and that of Miss Kitty are endangered by the upsetting of a boat. Miss Kitty, who has been preserved by the boatman, half-drowned and wholly unconscious, is carried to the house of her sister, which is situated in the vicinity of the accident. Miss Kitty recovers sufficiently to become reconciled to Amy and to execute a new will, under which Amy inherits the bulk of her sister's property. Kitty then dies in Amy's arms.

Grace is discovered to be the daughter, by a previous marriage, of the Lady Beauclerk, who, it may be remembered, was the indirect cause of the duel in India. The novel ends, as may have been anticipated, with the union of Ernest Harrington and Grace of Glenholme.

It may be asked, by what method so simple a story could possibly occupy so many as eleven hundred pages in its relation. Our readers will perceive by the following random extract how readily such a task may be accomplished when so much verbiage is employed:—

"Mother," said he, kissing her cheek, and then pinching it to fix the impression; "you will never

guess where I have been, if you guess till doomsday!"

"Surely!"

"Try."

"Till doomsday! And you bursting with all that impatience? There's wisdom! I am in no hurry, if you are not. Dinner will be ready in ten minutes."

"Oh, bother dinner! I don't want any!"

"Cold shoulder of mutton, too, and mashed potatoes!"

"I haven't the least appetite."

"Lunched late, and heartily, maybe, at the pastry cook's?"

"Did I though? You don't call four gooseberry tarts anything?"

"That all? Twopenny ones I suppose?"

"I say, mother."

"What?"

"How do I know you won't be awfully angry, if I tell you?"

"Son of mine to say that!"

"I shouldn't wonder though."

We have not read either 'York House' or 'Betty Westminster,' two novels which have been already published by the same author. We can only hope, for the sake of those who have had that advantage, that Mr. Platt is one of that class of authors who exhaust their genius in their earlier efforts. There certainly remains no perceptible remnant in his last book, on the merits of which we have been compelled to pronounce so unfavourable a verdict.

MADAGASCAR.*

THIS is a simple and unpretending little volume by Mrs. Ellis, the object of which is to state the present position of that interesting country Madagascar. It is compiled chiefly from the most recent journals and letters of Mr. Ellis, the missionary, who first visited that island in 1853, and having returned to England and written a sterling book upon the subject, has gone back thither again. This little volume may be looked upon as a mere sketch, which will hereafter be enlarged into a fuller and more complete work by Mr. Ellis himself. We quite agree with the authoress in thinking that 'when an island of the size and relative importance of Madagascar is beginning to assume a place amongst civilised nations, it is of consequence that its history should be clearly understood.' And we also think that the facts as narrated by Mrs. Ellis fully bear out her assertion that 'Never has the natural world presented a spectacle more astonishing in the upheaving of its physical structure than that which is now taking place in the structure of mind and body, and of social and public institutions, in the island of Madagascar.' Its history has been 'a history of extremes; of rapid and astonishing progress, and then of darkness, paralysis, and destitution as extreme.' There are several different races in Madagascar, but the Hovas have acquired a predominance over the rest, and their king is called, and now actually is, the king of the whole island. Our first treaties of friendship and alliance date from 1817, when Radama I. was on the throne; and in the following year missionaries were sent out by the London Society. The people made great progress in European civilisation, and large numbers became Christians. But in 1828 the king died, and then, under Ranaivalona, one of his wives, who succeeded to the throne, a period of retrogression followed. A terrible persecution broke out, and the queen issued stringent edicts against the Christians, which terminated with the expression, 'And I change not.' The Bible, the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' and other books which had been translated into Malagasy, were confiscated and destroyed wherever they could be found, although many persons succeeded in keeping them in various hiding-

places. The Europeans were not meddled with, because their worshipping Christ was not treason against the Queen of Madagascar; but her subjects fared otherwise. Awful tortures were inflicted; many were burnt to death who refused to recant, and many were 'thrown over a steep precipice, the Tarpeian Rock of Antananarivo,' the capital. They bore their dreadful trials with the greatest constancy and fortitude. Neither age nor sex was spared; and there is one case recorded which forms a curious historical coincidence with an execution which took place in Guernsey in Queen Mary's reign. A woman was being burnt, and was actually delivered of a child in the midst of the flames. The child was rescued from the fire, but was afterwards thrown back and perished. The same circumstance, identical in every particular, happened in Madagascar. These persecutions continued at intervals until 1861, in August of which year the queen died, and was succeeded by King Radama II., her son. This prince appears to be a most enlightened monarch. He allows entire freedom of religion to his subjects; and the priests of the old idols, and Roman Catholic and Protestant missionaries, were equally assured of his protection, and were present at his coronation.

Embassies were sent from England and France to be present at this solemnity, which was conducted in quite an European fashion; the king, moreover, being dressed in the full uniform of a British Field-Marshal, which had been sent to him by Queen Victoria. The account of the coronation is very interesting. The king crowned himself, and, having done so, made a speech, the concluding words of which were: 'This also I say to you; I will support justice and right among you. Not the great only, nor the small only, shall live in peace; not the rich only, nor the poor only, but all people, according to their circumstances. Pursue, therefore, now your respective avocations, make your work solid, promote commerce. Trust in me all under the sky, for my word unto all under the sky is, Salutation of prosperity—salutation of happiness.'

The coronation banquet was a great success, quite in the European style. The table was spread for a hundred guests, including General Johnstone and Commodore Dupré, the chiefs of the English and French embassies, and their companions. 'A calf roasted whole and garnished was the principal dish at the upper end. On the sideboards were piled large substantial portions of solid food, while poultry, game, and fish covered the table, which was ornamented with vases of silver manufactured by native artists after European models ranged along the centre, artificial flowers, sweetmeats, preserved apricots, pine-apples, plums, and cakes intervening. The healths of the sovereigns of Madagascar, England, and France were drunk.' The king is very musical, and Her Majesty sent him a set of musical instruments for a military band with which he was very much delighted. Mr. Ellis tells us, moreover, that there is a Malagasy National Anthem, a kind of 'God save the Queen.' The latest letter from Mr. Ellis bears date so recently as the 6th of December. Christianity is making great progress, large numbers of persons showing that they had not forgotten their early lessons, but had kept up their religion, encouraging one another in secret during the times of persecution. Schools and churches are in contemplation or begun, printing-presses are established, and all European arts and manufactures are greedily sought after by the natives, who show great quickness in learning. The king and the people—at least the great majority—are well disposed to all foreigners, but more especially towards the English. The island is very fertile, producing among other things large herds of cattle, which are most valuable to our neighbouring colony of the Mauritius. There has always been more or less traffic between the Mauritius and Madagascar, but a most important commerce is now being rapidly developed. With respect to the reported intrigues of the French and that doubtful personage M. Lambert, Mrs. Ellis says that the

* Madagascar: its Social and Religious Progress. By Mrs. Ellis. London: James Nisbet, Berners St. 1863.

French treaty 'contained nothing to distinguish it from the terms upon which intercourse was proposed to be held with other countries.'

REMARKABLE ADVENTURERS.*

MR. LASCELLES WRAXALL is surely one of the most industrious of English book makers. Within a comparatively few weeks he has furnished the reading public with an elaborate translation of 'Les Misérables,' has thrown off a novel, 'Married in Haste,' and now publishes the work the title of which is at the foot of our review. His subject embraces a wide range, and though the information contained has in some form or other been already made public, the experience of the collator has served up the old material in so agreeable a fashion that the dish has acquired a fresh flavour by the operation. Among the adventurers, one of the most remarkable is the Count de Ruggiero, an alchemist who lived at the close of the seventeenth century, and who assumed the power of metallic transmutation. He first appeared at the court of the Elector Maximilian of Bavaria, bearing an introduction from the Bavarian envoy at Madrid. He pretended that he had the secret of the philosopher's stone, and during the preparations for its exhibition was treated most sumptuously by the court. He did not fulfil his promises, was convicted as a cheat, and only contrived to escape from his prison after a confinement of six years. He then proceeded to Vienna, gave a specimen of his skill in the presence of Count Anthony of Lichtenstein, and was so successful, that the Emperor Leopold I. engaged him at a salary of six thousand florins. The Emperor dying, the count found a new patron in John William, the Elector of the Palatinate, who was then residing in Vienna. Ruggiero pledged his head that within six weeks he would supply him with seventy-two million florins. It is hardly necessary to say that the promise was not fulfilled, and that at the earliest opportunity the alchemist disappeared from the city.

We next hear of our adept at Berlin, under the name of Count Cætano. There he had set up a gilded coach and sent 'a petition to the court, in which he begged the king's protection against the persecutions of foreign powers, and promised largely to enrich the royal treasury by the process of transmutation. Frederick I. was not indisposed to go into the affair, especially as Cætano very confidently offered to prove his skill, but for all that the advice of experts was called in. A Danish alchemist residing at Berlin at the time, of the name of Deppel, was commissioned to form Cætano's acquaintance. The count, without any hesitation, showed him his tinctures, the red and the white, and performed sundry experiments. According to the principles of the alchemists there were means of generating both gold and silver by the aid of science. Gold was produced by the exhibition of the red tincture, also called the philosopher's stone or the grand elixir, and silver by that of the white tincture, also known as the lesser elixir or second stone. The transmutation was effected by projection, that is to say, dropping the tincture into the liquid metal. According to the strength of the tincture, it tinged five, ten, or thirty thousand parts; that is, transmuted so many times its own weight of an ignoble metal into a noble one. The white tincture was produced from the same ingredients as the red, and passed over into the latter by a continuation of the manipulatory processes. Deppel, it appeared, produced seven pounds of quicksilver, which the count placed in a retort standing in a sandbath and heated till it began to smoke, when he dropped one piece of the white tincture into the retort. A tremendous fizzing ensued, and when that ceased, he took the retort out and hurled it on the ground: the metal it con-

tained Deppel recognised to be fine silver. This successful experiment gained Cætano permission to perform a second one in the presence of the king himself. The crown prince, who did not put much faith in the count, took all possible precautions; he supplied all the requisites himself, and carefully watched Cætano when he filled the retort; moreover, gold-workers were summoned to test the metal immediately it was produced. The count made three experiments. In the first, the conversion of quicksilver into gold, a quantity of the former was placed in a crucible, and when it began bubbling, Cætano poured in a few drops of a red thick fluid; the contents were stirred, the crucible removed in half an hour to let it cool, and the metal in it, above one pound in weight (we do not learn how much quicksilver was employed), proved to be fine gold on being tested. In the second experiment, Cætano converted a similar quantity of quicksilver into silver by means of his white liquid, and in the third, he "tinged" a copper staff which he had made red-hot, and converted one-half of it into gold. Lastly, he handed the king fifteen grains of white and four grains of red tincture, which he estimated at ninety pounds of silver and twenty pounds of gold, and promised furthermore to deliver within sixty days eight ounces of red and seven ounces of white tincture, with which he declared gold and silver to the value of seven million thalers could be produced.'

The king was delighted; and Cætano set to work to prepare the tinctures.

'Several weeks were passed in expectation, the court awaiting the golden results of the count's science, the count awaiting valuable presents from the king. As, however, the king believed that Cætano could not be in want of money, the only present he made him was a dozen of old French wine. It was very natural that the honoured adept should feel greatly dissatisfied in a few weeks. Moreover, the period was approaching when he must deliver the promised tincture. Hence he resolved to leave Berlin, and proceeded to Hildesheim. From that town he wrote the King of Prussia that he would teach his secret to any one the monarch thought proper to select. The court assented to this, and it was fancied that the time had arrived to bind the alchemist more closely. A chamberlain was therefore sent to Hildesheim, who delivered to Cætano the king's portrait set in diamonds, of the value of twelve hundred thalers, and a commission as major-general of artillery.'

The alchemist did not entirely satisfy the chamberlain, and Cætano proceeded to Hamburg, where he fell into great poverty. The Prussian king having been warned that his protégé was a swindler, had him arrested in his capacity as major-general, and brought back to Berlin. The Count met the charge with boldness, and offered to resume his operations, and once more produced silver. The success of this experiment restored him to favour. He was lodged in the palace, the court cook supplying him with ten dishes for dinner and eight for supper. He subsequently engaged to convert a hundred weight of quicksilver into gold, but disappeared before the experiment could be performed.

'He went to Frankfort-on-the-Maine, but on the request of the Prussian minister he was arrested, handed over to a party of Prussian troops at Sachsenhausen, and conveyed to Cüstrin. Here he was ordered to make fresh experiments, but as they were utterly unsuccessful, he was condemned to death. The beam of the gallows on which he was hung was coated with Dutch metal. He went bravely to his death, tenderly embraced his wife on the road, and died on August 23, 1709, with a calmness worthy of a better life. After his death, his body was dressed in a robe also covered with Dutch metal.'

'All that remains to us is to inquire who this man really was, and what foundation there was for his pretended science. The first question is easily answered: Cætano was the son of a peasant of

Petrabianca, near Naples. He was apprenticed to a goldsmith, and eventually travelled about Italy as a conjuror. According to his own statement, he learnt from a stranger, *circa* 1695, the art of making gold, and proceeded to Madrid to carry it out, where he remained four months.'

'But did he really possess this art? This question can be answered in different ways, according as the possibility of transmutation may be confirmed or denied. It is indubitable that he possessed a red and a white tincture, by which he produced remarkable changes in metals; this is proved by a number of credible witnesses. And even the author of the semi-official report, Privy Secretary Hesse, who had no reason to spare Cætano, does not doubt that he possessed tinctures, by means of which he could convert quicksilver into gold and silver. At the same time, however, he denies that Cætano knew the secret of producing these tinctures; and in this view he is supported by a recent learned investigator into alchemy, Professor Schmieder, of Kassel, who writes:—

'“Cætano had only a sufficient quantity of these tinctures to perform a series of experiments, but not enough to manufacture unbounded wealth. This he tried to obtain by acts of swindling; he procured credit by means of the true tincture, raised money from his dupes by leading them to hope that they would soon be in possession of wealth, and then disappeared.”'

Mr. Wraxall gives an admirable account of Prince Kaunitz, the prime minister of Maria Theresa. The two great objects of his life were the expulsion of the Jesuits from Austria and the reconciliation of the courts of France and Vienna. In pursuance of this latter purpose, he was sent as ambassador to Versailles, where he became most popular. He entirely convinced the French court of the policy of his views; but it occupied three years before he could induce the Empress Maria Theresa to descend from her imperial dignity, and write, from Kaunitz's dictation, a letter to the Pompadour. It commenced:—

'“Madam, my dear Sister and Cousin,” to which the royal mistress very coolly replied, “My dear Queen.” When the Emperor heard of this correspondence he was furious; and, as he was only the husband of his wife, he vented his fury on the chairs and tables. Maria Theresa was quite astonished at this outburst, and simply remarked, “Did I not before this write to Farinelli, the singer?” A volume would not describe Maria Theresa's character better than does this sentence. An offensive and defensive alliance between the two countries was formed; and the Jesuits, who feared the influence of French ideas in Austria, did their utmost to thwart it.'

Then began the second struggle in the life of Kaunitz—his efforts to expel the Jesuits from the Austrian dominions.

'The prime minister, knowing the people with whom he had to deal, henceforth took his precautions. From the moment of declaring hostilities with the ultramontanists, Kaunitz never touched a dish which was not prepared by his own *maitre d'hôtel*, and served by a domestic entirely devoted to him. If invited to dinner by the empress, or any personage of rank, he abstained from all food placed on the table; his faithful servant brought him his repast, including bread, wine, and water, and his great temperance was of service to him. After a desperate struggle in the dark, Kaunitz gained the victory; but it was chiefly by working upon the ambassadors of the foreign powers at Vienna. Pombal, Aranda, and Choiseul, who expelled the Jesuits from Portugal, Spain, and France, had all three represented their nation at Vienna, and yielded to the influence of the great politician.'

The eccentricities of his domestic life were many. He was particularly careful of his toilet and his diet:—

'According to the Baron von Gleichen, Kaunitz was tall and well built, and, although his peruke

* Remarkable Adventurers and Unrevealed Mysteries. By Lascelles Wraxall. London: Bentley. 1863.

with its five rows of curls was rather comical, there was a certain look of grandeur about his person. This peruke, by the way, was the object of his worship. Being anxious that all the curls should be regularly powdered, servants wielding puffs were arranged in a double row, and the prince walked up and down between them, reflecting on political affairs. Each servant sent a cloud of powder over him as he passed, and after several turns his peruke was of an immaculate hue.

'As his whole life was spent in reflecting and working, the prince took immense care of his health. The milk, coffee, and sugar that formed his breakfast were scrupulously weighed like drugs: at one o'clock he took a cup of chocolate, and his dinner consisted of the simplest dishes. He tried to keep all care aloof, and sacrificed all possible considerations to his convenience, habits, and comfort. In his early days he accustomed Maria Theresa to see him shut all the windows in the palace, and put on a small cap when he found that the draught was too strong. Whenever, therefore, he was seen crossing the court-yard (which he only did on the hottest days with a handkerchief placed to his mouth), the imperial footmen would fly to close the windows, shouting, "Here he is, here he is!"'

'On the very morning that terminated the reign of Maria Theresa, while the empress was wrestling with death, he had himself dressed with his usual care. To protect himself against changes of temperature, he constantly had within reach nine silk cloaks, which he put on or off according to the guidance of a thermometer hung in each of his rooms. He had a horror of the open air, and it must be very warm indeed for him to be seen sitting for a few moments in the garden of his palace. Still this privation of fresh air only injured his complexion, which was pallid, but not his constitution, for he lived to be eighty-four.'

In his old age, Kaunitz had a great fear of death:—

'So far was this carried, that strangers of distinction who arrived in Vienna were warned to yield to the chancellor's wishes on this point, and no allusion must even be made to his birthday. No one had the courage to tell him of the death of Frederick the Great, until one of his readers said in his presence, as if inadvertently, that the courier had arrived from Berlin with letters from King Frederick William. When Joseph II. expired, the prince's chamberlain laid before him a document which should have had the imperial sign-manual, saying in explanation, "his majesty no longer signs." The prince was in the habit of sending dishes from his table to a favourite aunt, and this went on long after her decease, as no one cared to tell him she had been dead for four years. When his eldest and best-beloved son died, the prince only learned the fact by the deep mourning laid out for himself to wear.'

The end of the veteran minister was of a most painful character. He grew feebler with advancing age, but even the Emperor did not dare to deprive him of the power he had wielded for upwards of forty years. At last, he was quietly ignored, and the Baron Cobenzle, the vice-chancellor, transacted business in his name. His signature was even forged, and applied to state papers opposed to his political opinions. This last insult so stung the chancellor, that he deliberately refused all sustenance, and starved himself to death.

The curious prophecy of Jacques Cazotte finds a place in Mr. Wraxall's book:—

'In the year 1788, Cazotte supped with a distinguished party of guests at the house of the Duchess de Grammont. He sat silent at one end of the table, staring at his half-empty glass, and only rousing from his reverie when the victory of philosophy over "religious superstition" was too tacitly announced. Suddenly he sprang up, leant over the table, and said in a hollow voice, and with pallid cheeks:

"You have reason to congratulate yourselves, gentlemen, for you will all be witness of the great

and sublime revolution which you so eagerly desire. As you are aware that I understand something about prophesying, be good enough to listen to me. You, M. Condorcet, will give up the ghost, lying on the floor of a subterranean dungeon; you, M. N—, will die of poison; and you, M. N—, by the executioner's hand."

'On hearing this strange outbreak, all began protesting that prisons, poison, and executioner, had nothing in common with philosophy and the sovereignty of reason, on whose speedy approach the soothsayer had just congratulated them; but Cazotte coldly continued:

"And all this, I tell you, will happen in the name of reason, humanity, and philosophy. All I have announced will take place when reason is the sole ruler, and has its temples."

"In any case," Chamfort retorted, "you will not be one of the priests of that temple."

"Not I, M. de Chamfort, but you assuredly will, for you deserve to be chosen before all for such functions. For all that, you will open your veins in two-and-twenty places with a razor, and will not die till some months after that desperate operation. As for you, M. Vicq d'Azyr, it is true that the gout will prevent you opening your veins, but you will have them opened by another person six times in the same day, and die during the following night. You, M. de Nicolai, will die on the scaffold; and so will you, M. de Malsherbes!"

"Thank Heaven!" Richer exclaimed, "M. Cazotte only owes a grudge to the Academie."

'But Cazotte quickly continued:

"You, too, M. Richer, will die on the scaffold; and those who are preparing such a destiny for yourself and the rest of the company here present are all philosophers like you."

"And when will all these fine things happen?" some one asked.

"Within six years from to-day."

Every one acquainted with the history of the French Revolution, will perceive how exactly the prophecy was fulfilled.

The author introduces his readers to the celebrated savant La Condamine, in connection with the sect of Convulsionists who enlisted great attention in the early part of the eighteenth century. Condamine seems to have been naturally somewhat of an eccentric character:—

'The celebrated savant La Condamine was the victim of a curiosity and desire for learning which harmonised badly with his deafness. When he saw two persons conversing in a low voice, he not only walked up to them in the most indiscreet manner, but also took his trumpet out of his pocket, and put it to his ear in order to try and overhear them. If he noticed a letter lying on a table, he could not refrain from opening and reading it. When M. de Choiseul was ambassador at Rome, he found La Condamine, with whom he was very intimate, in his study, engaged in reading his papers; M. de Choiseul, with the most serious air and tragical voice, thereupon told him that his duty ordered him to have him at once arrested and sent off by the next ship to France, to be put in the Bastille, because at this moment there was a political secret about of such importance that the mere suspicion of having a knowledge of it was sufficient to insure his incarceration until the secret was rendered public. In vain did La Condamine protest that he had really read nothing and knew nothing. Choiseul sent for the guard, had a post chaise got in readiness, and caused the too-curious savant such terror, that the witnesses of this comical scene had the greatest difficulty in keeping their seriousness. It is also asserted that La Condamine committed a slight theft in Constantinople, in order that he might be bastinadoed, and judge for himself of the sensations produced by the punishment. When Damians was executed, curiosity impelled La Condamine not only to mingle with the crowd and force the barriers placed round the scaffold, but he also made his way into the circle formed by all the executioners from the vicinity of Paris, who were

attracted by their desire of seeing Charlot work. The latter, on recognising La Condamine, exclaimed: "Gentlemen, pray make room for M. La Condamine; he is an amateur." Another amusing anecdote is also told of him. While he was travelling in Italy, he entered the church of a village near the sea-shore, where he noticed a lighted candle. He asked the reason, and was told that it was generally believed in the country that if the candle were allowed to go out without lighting another, the sea would immediately swallow up the village. La Condamine at once blew out the candle, to see what would happen. He had the greatest difficulty in the world in escaping from the exasperation of the peasants, who wished to massacre him on the spot.'

A chapter of the work is devoted to Kaspar Hauser, the adopted son of Lord Stanhope, the mystery of whose birth was so prolific a source of discussion, and whose assassination occasioned so angry a controversy. Mr. Wraxall very shortly disposes of Hauser's claim to veracity.

'A fortnight after Hauser's burial, Privy Councillor von Lang, whom we saw making such a virulent attack on him at the funeral, published a fierce article in the same sense, in which he asserted that all Hauser's statements about meeting a stranger in the palace garden were proved to be false, for no footsteps were found in the snow beside Kaspar Hauser's own, and the note in the silk purse was in his own handwriting. To this Lord Stanhope added a number of fresh proofs, among them being one of a most decisive character: that Meyer had seen the silk purse before in the possession of Kaspar Hauser. In spite of this, however, Lord Stanhope offered a reward of 5,000 florins for the discovery of Hauser's murderer, in addition to the 10,000 offered by the King of Bavaria. No one claimed the reward by denouncing the assassin, and, through this very circumstance, many persons were disposed to regard the unfortunate young man as a suicide. We are of the opinion, however, that no one could earn this reward, and that Kaspar Hauser was a suicide, although innocently so.'

In conclusion, we extract an account of the Jew Deutz, who betrayed the Duchess de Berry to Louis Philippe.

Simon Deutz, the son of a grand rabbi of France, was early converted to the Church of Rome, and became one of the most active agents of the French legitimist party. The Duchess de Berry, after the last abortive attempt at insurrection, was concealed at Nantes. The Jew Deutz, for the sum of 300,000 francs, promised to deliver the princess into the power of Louis Philippe and his minister M. Thiers. Availing himself of his connections with the legitimist party, he visited Nantes, and at length contrived to obtain a meeting with the princess. He had craft enough to obtain the promise of a second interview. On this occasion the troops under the command of General Demonceourt, silently occupied the whole of the quarter.

'Deutz was introduced to his confiding patroness and benefactress; his countenance was calm; he had at least the courage of a criminal, and poured forth hypocritical assurances of his fidelity and devotion. While he was speaking, a letter was delivered to the duchess, in which she was told that she was betrayed, and she laughingly imparted the news to Deutz. The scoundrel mastered his terror and continued to protest his devotion. The unsuspecting princess dismissed the traitor; but he had scarce left the house when bayonets gleamed all around it, and the police commissaries rushed in, pistol in hand. The duchess fled, with Mlle. Styliste de Kersabiec and M. Mesnard and Guibourg, to the narrow hiding-place formed in a corner of the wall, and covered by a chimney plate.

'The police, at whose head the préfet, Maurice Duval, placed himself, only found in the house the two Mlles. Duquigny, Madame de Charette, Mlle. Celeste de Kersabiec, and naturally did not obtain the slightest information from these staunch friends.

The police were furious, as they could find nothing. The préfet sent for bricklayers and sappers; all the furniture was opened, and the walls pierced at twenty different spots. The work of destruction lasted through the whole night. In the meanwhile, the duchess, and those concealed with her, suffered fearfully from want of air, and went in turn to the small opening through which they inhaled fresh air. Their position became frightful when the gendarmes lit a fire in the chimney, and the plate which concealed them became red-hot. All hope of escape faded away when the prisoners heard that the house would remain occupied by the troops until the duchess was found: the police were too well informed, and knew, through Deutz, that Madame could not have quitted the house.

"The torture had endured for sixteen hours, the chimney was red-hot, and then Mlle. de Kersabiec cried to the gendarmes, "We will come out; remove the fire." At the same moment M. Guibourg kicked down the chimney-plate, and the duchess, pale, and in a half-fainting condition, was carried through the flames into the room. General Demoncourt, the procureur Baudot, and several officers hurried in. "General, I surrender to your loyalty," said the duchess. "Madame," the latter replied, deeply affected, "you are under the protection of French honour." And, in truth, he treated her with all the courtesy due to her high rank, the circumstance, and the woman."

The traitor Deutz still lives, though under another name. He is married, and has a profitable appointment in Algiers.

Mr. Wuxall's two volumes contain a vast amount of information, not only of the political life, but of the social manners of our ancestors.

GOSSIP.

THE contractors to the Exhibition of 1862 are but men of business after all. During the Exhibition season we were told that they had acted with the most noble unselfishness, the building having been constructed by them at a large personal loss. At the same time it was ostentatiously announced that Mr. Kelk intended to retire from business after the completion of the great work. We always felt some difficulty in reconciling this fact with the other of the loss, and have awaited with some curiosity for the solution of the riddle. It has now come out, and we understand why Mr. Kelk intends to retire into private life. Messrs. Kelk and Lucas undertook to erect the Exhibition building for a very large and remunerative sum of money, but it was stipulated that, in the event of the receipts not reaching a certain fixed amount, a portion of this money (more than half) should only be paid, and this portion should be guaranteed to the contractors by a number of substantial persons. Well, the receipts did not exceed the sum agreed upon, and the contractors in consequence were only paid their very handsome instalment; but (and this is an important but) the building itself was mortgaged to them as a security for the payment of the remainder of their claim. The result then is, that Messrs. Kelk and Lucas have had nearly 200,000*l.* for the rent only of the Exhibition building, and now the building itself is theirs in consideration of the balance. Messrs. Kelk and Lucas were well aware how anxious the gentlemen at the South Kensington Museum would be to take it off their hands, and they seem to be already most active in endeavouring to sell it to the country. We do not know what their proposal is; but a few evenings ago Mr. Gladstone announced that it was against the interest of the nation that the offer of the contractors should be accepted. We may therefore rationally conclude that the proposal is one that is not inconsistent with Mr. Kelk's early retirement from business. Any way, the building is a great bargain to the proprietors, who need be under no apprehension of its not being turned to profitable account. While on this sub-

ject, we may remark that the exhibitors were most unfairly sold last year by the Commissioners to Messrs. Kelk & Lucas. These gentlemen were allowed to have almost a monopoly of the construction of stands, cases, &c. The building was filled with their offices and staff, and nearly all the internal fixtures were made by them. Soon after the opening of the Exhibition the accounts were sent out, and their amounts alarmed the boldest exhibitors. Such monstrous charges were never made before; they were, we believe, disputed in nearly every case. Two persons we know offered much less than half the sum claimed, and they were readily accepted. We have seen no cases in the law courts, and therefore presume that every one was compromised. We do not blame Messrs. Kelk and Lucas for looking so sharply after their own interest. We do blame, however, the simple commissioners who allowed their exhibitors to be handed over *en masse* to these acute gentlemen, and who seem to believe that clever men of business undertake gigantic contracts for sentimental reasons only.

A new weekly review will shortly make its appearance under the direction of Mr. Dallas of the 'Times.' It will consist of essays on political, literary, and social topics, but there are to be no book reviews. The new review will, we presume, act as eldest son to old Jupiter, and do battle with the rude young men of the 'Saturday Review,' who take such frequent liberties with the old deity of the press.

The controversy between the 'Saturday Review' and the 'Times,' respecting the accuracy of Mr. Kinglake's 'History of the Invasion of the Crimea,' is terminated at last. The 'Saturday Review' seems to have been supplied with answers to the 'Times' attacks by the author himself. They are well designated in the latter journal as 'squires who dip their pens into Mr. Kinglake's ink bottle' to fight his battles. If the 'Saturday Review' has been actuated by personal friendship in the controversy, the 'Times' may be said to have been influenced by the elaborate sneer levelled at their paper by Mr. Kinglake in the first volume of his history. A sneer is always more dangerous than an open attack, because there is nothing specific to answer. The 'Times' seems to have felt acutely the undignified manner in which Mr. Kinglake speaks of it; but, on examination, it will be found that his long roundabout description of the leading journal contains nothing at all absolutely prejudicial to it. It amounts merely to this—That the 'Times' is essentially a commercial speculation. Everybody knew this fact; and we may ask, Does not the success of 'Tennyson's Idylls of the King' result in a very good commercial conclusion? And does not the same remark apply to Lord Macaulay's 'History of England'—and even to Mr. Kinglake's 'History of the Invasion of the Crimea,' by which, we understand, he will realise 10,000*l.*, at the expense of much pain to many individuals, whom he has so cleverly ridiculed?

Messrs. Goetzel, the publishers, of Mobile, in the Southern Confederacy, have set a worthy example to the literary pirates of the Northern States. Unasked, they have allowed to Sir Lytton Bulwer a royalty of ten cents on each copy they sell of 'The Strange Story.' The firm enclosed an order for 1,000 dollars to the author as an earnest of their intention.

The Museum of the Hartley Institute at Southampton has been enriched by a valuable collection of Silurian fossils, presented by Mr. J. B. Thomas.

H.R.H. the Prince of Wales has been elected an honorary member of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

M. Vienne is about to publish his epic poem of 'La Française,' on which he has been employed for more than fifty years.

Mr. Lewis, the son of the comedian who was so popular with George IV., has bequeathed 10,000*l.* to the trustees of the National Gallery.

The House of Commons will be asked this year to vote 3,000*l.* for the publication of documents connected with the History of England.

The Duke of Sutherland has purchased at Turin, one of the most beautiful works of the Neapolitan sculptor, Gennaro Cali. It is named, 'Hecate Sleeping in the Crescent Moon.'

The 'Hunter and the Wounded Fawn,' a group by Gibson, was recently sold by order of the executors of Lord Herbert of Lea. It fetched 420*l.*

The stage in Prussia is now subjected to rigid censorship. A piece has been recently prohibited because it contained allusions to Sir Hudson Lowe, which it was thought might give offence to the English government.

There are forty-five candidates for election at the Royal Society this year.

The Dean of Waterford has in the press a small volume entitled 'Exotics; or, English Words derived from Latin Roots.' It is on the same plan as his former work on 'English Roots,' of which a third edition has just been published.

The action brought by Dr. Kenealy against Mr. Peter Bayne, for his article on the 'New Pantomime,' in the 'Weekly Review,' has been abandoned.

The Prince of Wales has become the patron of a society which has been formed for the purpose of transcribing and printing numerous of the bardic and historical remains of Wales, which are still extant in the principality.

BOOKS PUBLISHED DURING THE WEEK.

- Blomfield (Bp.), *Memoir of, with Selections from his Correspondence*, by Rev. A. Blomfield, 2 vols. post 8vo. cl. 18*s.*
 Butler's *Argument on the Miracles Explained and Defended*, by Rt. Hon. J. Napier, cr. 8vo. sd. 6*d.*
 Carlisle's (Rev. H. H.) *The Late Celebration of the Marriage of the Prince of Wales: a Sermon*, fcp. 8vo. sd. 6*d.*
 Cator's (P.) *Punch in the Pulpit*, 3rd ed. fcp. 8vo. bds. 2*s.*
 Clarke's (Rev. C. P.) *Manual for Communion Classes*, fcp. 8vo. cl. 3*s.* 6*d.*
 Crutchley's *County Atlas of England and Wales*, royal 8vo. cl. 6*s.* plain; 8*s.* coloured.
 Deserter's *House at Hawksworth*, 3 vols. post 8vo. cl. 31*s.* 6*d.*
 Down in a Mine; or, Buried Alive, 18mo. cl. 1*s.* 6*d.*
 Dunmune: a Temperance Tale, fcp. 8vo. boards, 1*s.*
 Formby's (Rev. H.) *Inquiry into the Roman Catholic Religion*, 18mo. sd. 2*s.*
 Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, with Notes by Rev. J. Milner, edited by Rev. I. Cobbin, new edition, 8vo. cl. 8*s.* 6*d.*
 Fry's (H.) *Shilling Guide to London Charities*, cr. 8vo. sd. 1*s.*
 Garbett's (Rev. E.) *The Kingdom and the People*, fcp. cl. 3*s.* 6*d.*
 Grove's (S. R.) *Yachting Cruise in the Baltic*, crown 8vo. cl. 12*s.* 6*d.*
 Harbaugh's (Rev. H.) *Will we know our Friends in Heaven?* fcp. 8vo. cl. 2*s.*
 Hassall's (Dr. A. H.) *Urine in Health and Disease*, 2nd ed. crown 8vo. cl. 12*s.* 6*d.*
 Hedderwick's *Miscellany*, Vol. 1, royal 8vo. cl. 3*s.* 6*d.*
 Helen Fleetwood, 4th edition, fcp. 8vo. cl. 5*s.*
 Hibbert's (S.) *Profitable Gardening*, fcp. 8vo. cl. 3*s.* 6*d.*
 Hill's (Rev. R.) *Village Dialogues*, 38th ed. fcp. 8vo. cl. 4*s.*
 Horace's *Odes and Carmen Seculare*, translated into English Verse by J. Conington, fcp. 8vo. half-bound, 5*s.* 6*d.*
 Howe's (John) *Works*, Vol. 5, 8vo. cl. 5*s.*
 Hunt's (J.) *Address on study of Anthropology*, 8vo. sd. 6*d.*
 Indian Annexation: British Treatment of Native Princes, 8vo. sd. 4*d.*
 Ingoldby Letters, Vol. 2, 3rd ed. royal 8vo. cl. 6*s.*
 Laishley's (R.) *Popular History of British Birds' Eggs*, new ed. imp. 16mo. cl. 5*s.*
 Langley's (Rev. J.) *Retributive Justice of God*, fcp. 8vo. cl. 3*s.*
 Macfarlane's (Rev. Dr. J.) *The Railway: Six Lectures*, fcp. 8vo. cl. imp. 1*s.* 6*d.*
 McNeill's (Canon) *Sermon on the Historical Veracity of the Pentateuch*, 8vo. sd. 1*s.*
 Marsh's (Rev. W. T.) *The Dark Night Usurping in the Dawn of Eternal Day*, 8vo. sd. 6*d.*
 Millhouse's (J.) *English and Italian Dictionary*, 2nd ed. 2 vols. crown 8vo. cloth, 14*s.*
 Millhouse's (J.) *Manual of Italian Conversation*, new ed. 18mo. cl. 2*s.*
 Mitchell's (E. H.) *Hand-book to St. Luke*, 18mo. cl. limp, 1*s.*
 Nora, the Lost and Redeemed, by Mrs. L. F. Fowler, post 8vo. boards, 1*s.* 6*d.*; cl. 2*s.* 6*d.*
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 Squires' (P.) *The Pharmacopoeias of Thirteen of the London Hospitals*, arranged for reference, 8vo. cl. 3*s.* 6*d.*
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